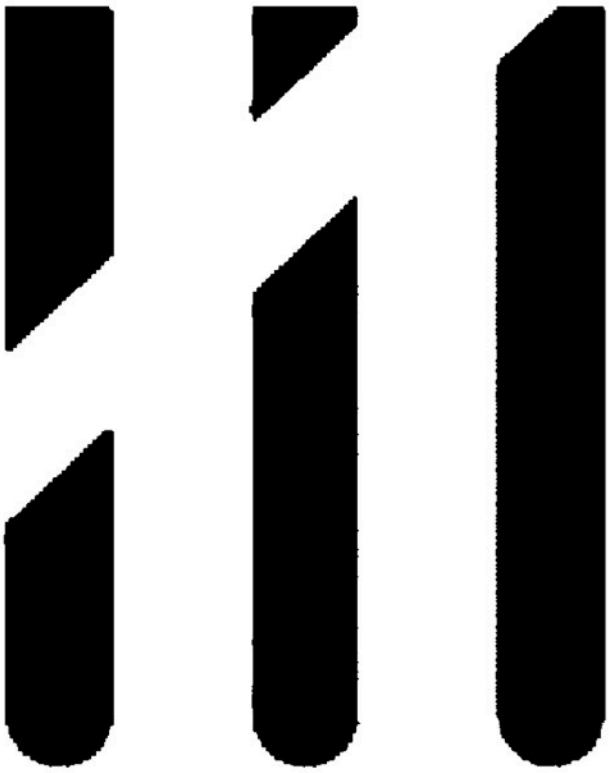

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A Meditation on Assassination, Myth, and the Work of Staying Human

By Sum Bunny

2025

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A Meditation on Assassination, Myth, and the Work of Staying Human
By Sum Bunny

There is a strange and unsettling way that assassination has been made to look “cool.”

Not intentionally, and not as a conspiracy —
but through decades of cinematic stylization, narrative compression, tragic lighting, slow-motion gunshots, and the mythic framing of a “single decisive act.”

Hollywood did not invent assassination.

But it did something almost as dangerous:

It made assassination look like resolution.

It made it seem

clean
symbolic
righteous
fated
meaningful

Even when films intend to condemn violence,
the aesthetic often turns the moment into spectacle.

The camera does not linger on grief
or paperwork
or the slow unraveling of real lives.

It lingers on choreography.

The world stops —
the music swells —
the story snaps shut.

And something inside us is quietly trained to believe:

This is what endings look like.

But assassination is not an ending.

It is a deletion.

And nothing about deletion is noble.

I. The Fantasy of the Decisive Act

Assassination tempts us with a dangerously simple story:

Here is the problem.
Here is the person associated with the problem.
Remove the person — remove the problem.

Cinema loves this structure because it is narratively efficient.

But life does not operate on screenwriting logic.

Problems are not stored inside individuals
like files inside a folder.

Problems are conditions —

systems
histories
fears
structures
incentives
traumas
misalignments
broken trust

They are distributed.
They are upstream.
They are shared.

Assassination pretends that deleting one node
removes the network.

In reality, it corrupts everything connected to it.

II. What Assassination Actually Does

Assassination does not simplify anything.

It fractures the world around it.

It replaces argument with silence.
It replaces politics with trauma.
It replaces accountability with myth.

A living person — flawed, contradictory, answerable —
is converted into a symbol that cannot respond.

Once a person becomes a symbol,
they stop being a subject
and become an object.

Their life becomes a narrative weapon.
Their death becomes raw material for other people's stories.

Assassination does not resolve conflict.

It fossilizes it.

It radicalizes the very forces it pretends to end.

Violence is never a conclusion.

Violence is only the story violence tells about itself.

III. The Logical Error — Ad Hominem Made Physical

Beyond its moral harm, assassination is logically bankrupt.

It is **ad hominem made physical** —

the collapse of argument
into attack on the person.

Instead of testing a belief, we erase a body.
Instead of challenging a claim, we remove a speaker.

Nothing has been proven.
Nothing has been refuted.
Nothing has been understood.

The argument has not been won.

The argument has been deleted.

And when a culture learns to resolve disagreement
through elimination,

it does not become righteous.

It becomes illiterate.

IV. Why Some People Identify With Assassins — A Careful Guess

I say this with humility, because I do not claim full insight.

I do not think most people who admire assassins
are celebrating death.

My sense — and I may be wrong —
is that some people see in the assassin
a reflection of their own pressure:

the rage of invisibility
the humiliation of being ignored
the exhaustion of systems that never answer back

The assassin appears less like a murderer
and more like a symbol of interruption —

a brutal punctuation mark
placed at the end of a sentence
they believe has gone on too long.

I can recognize that wound.

But I cannot accept the conclusion it leads to.

Because the fantasy of deletion is not justice.

It is despair masquerading as resolve.

V. Mixed Signals — Hollywood Spectacle vs. Human Cost

Our culture sends deeply mixed signals about assassination.

Hollywood often wraps political killing
in aesthetic language —

fatalistic scores
slow-motion smoke
tragic stillness
beautiful framing

Even films that *intend* to condemn violence
sometimes end up stylizing it.

The camera does not linger on the rupture.

It lingers on the gesture.

Assassination becomes

visually elegant
narratively efficient
emotionally cathartic

The moment reads like resolution.

And the audience receives — however unintentionally —
the message:

this is what decisive meaning looks like.

But every so often, a story refuses that myth.

Recently I watched a dramatization of
the assassination of President James Garfield.

And what struck me most was not the shot.

It was everything that **did not** fit inside the cinematic frame:

the medical agony
the septic deterioration
the procedural incompetence
the bureaucratic drift
the institutional failure
the people forced to live inside the consequences

Garfield did not die a “clean” death.

He died inside a machinery of neglect and error —

a slow tragedy of

misdiagnosis
ego
inaction
and systems that failed to care for him in time.

The story does not present closure.

It presents rupture.

And when you sit with that reality,
you feel how profoundly at odds it is
with the stylized grammar of Hollywood assassination.

Hollywood gives us spectacle.

History gives us infection
instability
grief

power vacuums
unanswered questions

and a silence
that can no longer answer back.

Assassination is not meaning.

It is the violent interruption of meaning.

VI. The Collapse Beneath the Gesture

I do not believe assassination comes from strength.

I believe it comes from collapse.

Sometimes it grows from the loneliness
of **disconnection from impact**

the feeling of having potential
but no place to contribute
no wire to carry the charge forward.

A hunger for usefulness
that curdles into hunger for impact
at any cost.

Sometimes it grows from the loneliness
of **disconnection from support**

the feeling of carrying the entire load
with no one under the beam beside you.

A life lived in overwhelm
that hardens into self-protection.

These are real wounds.

But when pain turns into the fantasy of erasure —
the fantasy of the clean deletion —

tragedy follows.

VII. Violence vs. Creativity

Violence is the antithesis of creativity.

Creativity

tests an idea
reveals its weaknesses
invites response
allows revision
keeps meaning alive

Violence refuses to let meaning live long enough
to be answered.

Creativity builds a bridge
across which disagreement can travel.

Violence burns the last remaining one.

If an idea cannot survive inside

a conversation
a poem
a song
a project

a painting
an essay
a debate
a shared effort

then perhaps what it needs is

more time
more language
more air

not more force.

Conversation is not weakness.

It is the condition of accountability.

VIII. The Call

Assassination is not justice.
It is not courage.
It is not clarity.

It is the deletion of a human being
in place of the work of understanding.

So my suggestion is this:

When we feel invisible,
let us seek contribution
not rupture.

When we feel crushed,
let us seek support
not control.

When we feel unheard,
let us turn pain into language

so that it may still be answered.

Do not delete the person
because the problem frightens you.

Do not delete the argument
by destroying the one who speaks it.

Do not delete the conversation.

Because the work of being human
is not elimination.

The work
is to keep
meaning alive
long enough
for another
mind
to meet it.

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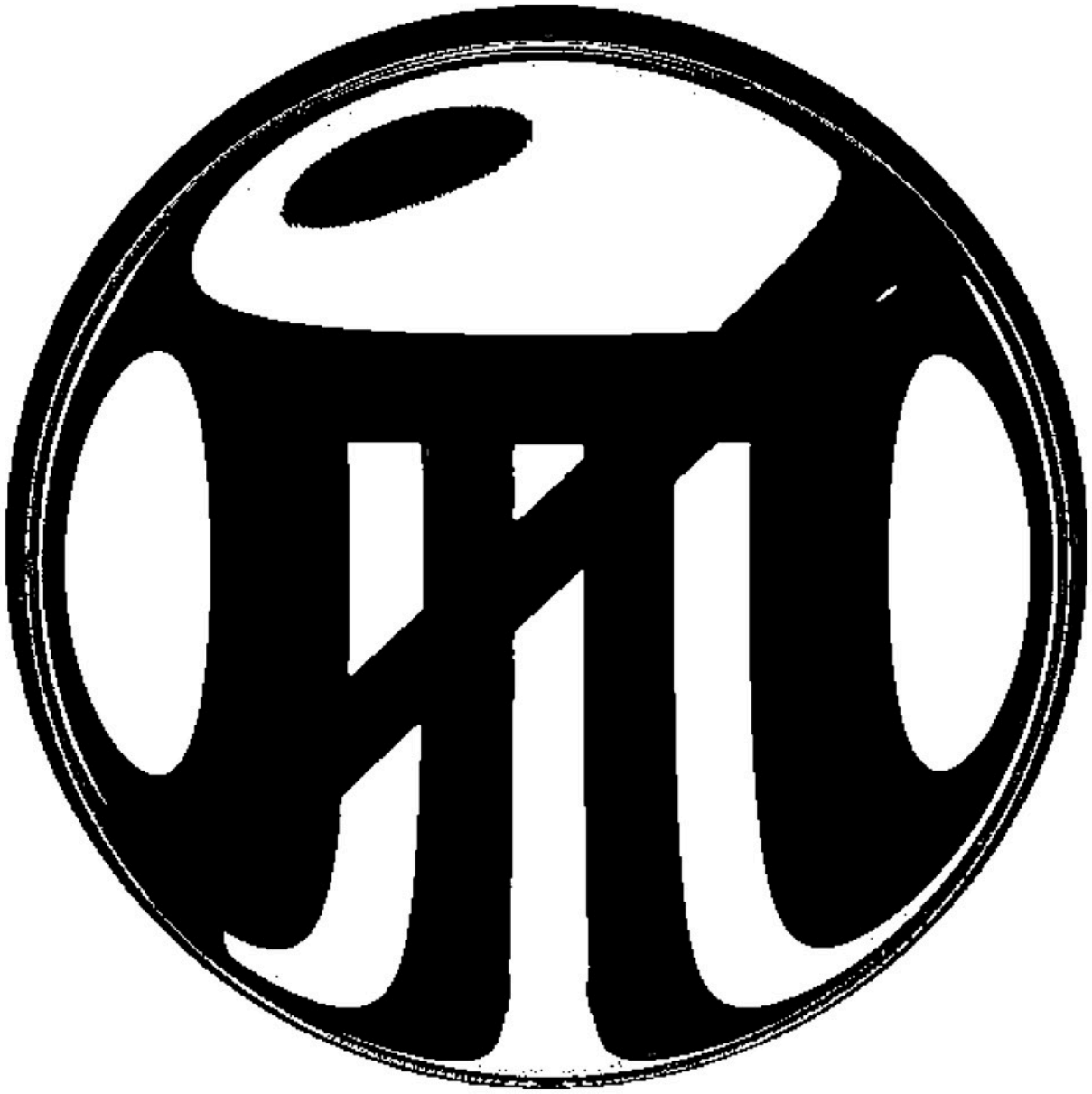
This was written through a collaboration between a human author and AI systems acting as analytical tools. The machines provided structure; the human provided judgment. Nothing appears here that the author did not personally create, refine, choose, and claim.



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